1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

Manufacture. slit-gongs are made of hard wood. The

name of the tree from which the wood is taken is *tólos* (P.) or *toras* (K.). Some villages do not know how to make these instruments for themselves; those who require one either buy it from other villages or pay workmen to come to their own place to make it. There were three unfinished ones in the deserted village of Gomen; those who commissioned them had not wished to pay the men of Hanahan to finish them. The best are said to be made by the people of Sollos, the hill district of Buka, to whom the art was first taught, according to the legend. Ownership of a *garamuts* is individual, and is restricted to persons who are *tsunaun*. A Kurtatchi man bought a fair-sized instrument from the island of Pororan for one fathom of *paio* (ceremonial currency of flying-fox teeth), one fathom of *beroan* (shell-disk currency), and ten bamboo lengths of *oin* (red paint). The man who made it demanded another fathom of *paio*, but did not get it.

They are made in the bush, where a shelter is erected over the spot. In the olden days they were shaped with stone or clam-shell implements, but now the outside is worked with metal blades hafted like an adze. Sticks are fastened along the top to define the narrow opening. The inside is then hollowed out with iron pig-spears or with knives fastened on to long rods. This used to be done with clam-shell tools. Leaves are rubbed on the instrument in process of working to make it easier, so that it will be finished quickly. They are also rubbed on the hands of the worker, together with lime, and then smeared over the slit-gong. I could not learn if any form of words is used with this procedure. If the instrument is left too long unfinished the wood gets too hard to work. To make one is considered quite an important undertaking. If two people work on it fairly constantly it takes about three weeks. Only a few people know the procedure; they pass on their knowledge to any one they care to select. Anybody can watch it being made, but the women take no part in making it.

Slit-gongs vary considerably in size. The largest I saw measured about 8 feet in length, the smallest about 3 feet. None were made at the village of Kurtatchi, but Karabun of Tabut made a small one at my request. This, though smaller than those in general use, was more than a model, since it was used in several dances before being handed over to me. The people were delighted with its tone, in fact some of them wanted it to be retained in the village instead of being given to me. It is decorated with a conventional pattern.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
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Mâbu (also called *aura*).

Next to the slit-gong, the most highly valued musical instrument is the *mabu*. It is used for dances, both ceremonial and social, in conjunction with the Pan-pipes, as an alternative to the slit-gong; the two are never heard together. 534

Manufacture. The *mabu* is made of the trunk of a small tree hollowed out. Several trees are suitable, including the kapok (*wakokon*); the wood must be hard enough on the outside to stand wear and tear, and soft enough inside to be picked out easily. A length is cut rather longer than is required for the finished instrument, stripped of its bark, and set up in the ground at an angle convenient for working. The trunk is then hollowed out with an iron pig-spear. Fire is used to assist the process. In the olden days a spear of hardwood was used. The mouthpiece consists of half a coco-nut shell with a hole bored in the top, stuck on with the kernel of the 'putty-nut'. 549

The outside may be left plain, or may be carved with various traditional designs, similar to those in use on canoes, paddles, &c. (see Fig. 25). The size varies considerably; the largest I saw was almost as tall as the player, while one which was made for me, somewhat smaller than usual, measures 38¾ × 17 inches (98·5 × 43·5 cm.). It was used at dances before being handed over to me, and pronounced to have a good note. [531]

There is no ritual attached to the making of these instruments. Anybody may make them, but as a considerable amount of labour is involved, not many people do. If a large one is wanted for a special dance, it is often borrowed from another village. When the owner of one of these instruments dies, his wife dashes it on the ground and breaks it, wailing as she does so. A man will sometimes break his own *mabu* when his wife dies. The pieces must be burnt, as must those of a *mabu* accidentally broken or worn out by use. On no account must they be thrown away. 549 426 768

Method of use. The *mabu* is blown like a trumpet, with loose lip. It is played only by men or the bigger boys. The player clasps both hands round the instrument near its upper end, sometimes resting the lower end against his knee. He bends his head over the mouthpiece and blows with his mouth close up to it, his cheeks distended (Pl. 64*a*). The sound produced consists of one deep booming note not unlike that of one string of a bass viol. 534

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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Pan-pipes (*ka'ur* or *wa'ur* and *piu*).

534 These are made in several sizes. The larger ones (*wa'ur*) have a mouthpiece made of 'putty-nut' which makes the aperture smaller (Pl. 65, 1). These usually consist of three reeds of different diameters. The smaller ones (*piu*) have no mouthpiece, but the edge of the cane may be bevelled (Pl. 65, 3 and 4). These are usually in fours, of the same diameter, but differing in length. Both kinds are always paired, one of a pair being open below, the other cut off just below a node, so that it is stopped. More elaborate ones, consisting of a number of canes of different lengths bound together in a bundle, are sometimes seen (Pl. 65, 2).

549 *Manufacture.* The pipes are made of bamboo. Just before a dance, men and boys go out into the bush and cut large quantities of suitable canes. The instruments are made by men and boys in the village, and there is no secrecy about it, in fact it is quite a social occasion, accompanied by much merriment. To cut Pan-
[534] pipes is *nayets o piu* (Pl. 64*b*). Fresh ones must be made for every dance, and thrown away afterwards, usually into the sea. But no objection was raised when I asked to be allowed to keep some of them. The nodes are poked out with a stick or a pig-spear. The first canes cut are carefully tried out till the required note is obtained, and the others are cut to these as measures. But some men estimate the length without measuring. One man told me he did not need to measure, because he could 'think in his belly'. I have heard men whistling the sequence of notes quite accurately.

533 *Method of use.* In playing, the instrument is held in both hands. The four notes are played in varying order, usually the highest one twice, then one of the intermediate ones twice, then the lowest one twice. The Pan-pipes are used in dances in conjunction with either the slit-gong or the *mabu*, the players standing in the centre
[562] of the men's wheel-like formation. Women do not play Pan-pipes even for fun.

534 There is also in use a notched-end flute made of a single reed,
177 with two or more stops, also called *piu* (Pl. 66*a*). This is merely
439 for amusement; it is never used in dances. I have seen girls playing it at Petats, but not at Kurtatchi. I incline to think it is not indigenous, but derived from the Chinese, who have traded in the district for some long time, and who sell them in their stores.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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PLATE 64

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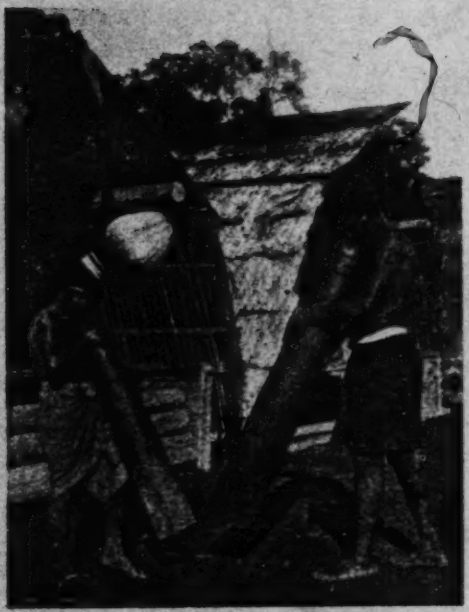

a. PLAYING *MABU*

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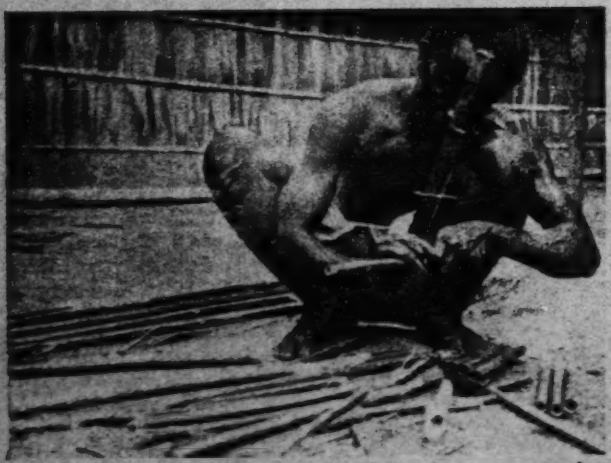

b. MAKING PAN-PIPES

[facing P. 412]